

Pediatric Medicines and Oral Health- Perceptions and Attitudes of Parents

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Aim: The main objectives of the study were to assess the level of awareness of oral health among parents with regards to the potentially harmful effects of children's medicines on teeth and to determine the advice/guidance given by doctors, pediatricians and pharmacists.

Methods: 700 validated 20-item questionnaires were distributed to parents of preschoolers at nursery schools. Questions were close-ended or open-ended and information on common medicines used by children, the mode of administration of medicines, precautions given as well as data on oral hygiene habits were gathered.

Results: The most common of medicines used by parents were antipyretics (66.1%), antihistamines (48.5%) and antitussives (40.7%). 90.5% parents reported their children take medicines in the form of a liquid. 71.8% parents mentioned the medication being taken by their children tasted sweet, however only 34.2% parents carried out oral hygiene practices after the administration of medicines. 9.8% parents had received oral hygiene advice regarding medications of which 7% performed oral hygiene routines. Only 15.5% parents were aware of the association between medicines and oral health. 56.2% of parents had never taken their child to the dentist while less than 20% took their child to the dentist when the child was in pain. Most parents (71.4%) stated that doctors and pediatricians do not monitor the oral health of the child.

Conclusion: In prescribing/dispensing liquid medicines to children, doctors and pediatricians should educate and advise parents on the administration with regards to oral health as well as consider sugar-free alternatives where available.

Biography:

Dr Shahid Mitha graduated with a BDS degree, going on to specialize in Pediatric Dentistry from the prestigious Eastman Dental Institute, University of London in 1996. Following this, he joined academia as Registrar with FJ Dental College, Karachi, eventually departing as Associate Professor of Pediatric Dentistry and Head, of Dental Materials Science in 2009 after a 13-year period. A Diploma in Healthcare Management was one of the qualifications he picked up during this journey. He joined International Medical University (IMU) Kuala Lumpur the same year and was part of the pioneer team developing the curriculum for the BDS program and the lead for Pediatric Dentistry. With an increasing interest in Medical Education, he embarked on a Masters in Health Professionals Education from Maastricht University, Netherlands as well a PhD in Medical Education from Malaysia.

He has joined PAPRSB Institute of Health Sciences in UBD from December 2016 with the task of commencing the inaugural BDS program in August 2017. The first cohort is currently in Second Year whilst the second cohort has commenced in 2018.